

DRAFT!!!

SEMG Advisory Council

NOTES

Date: Oct 10, 2023

Time: 1:00 pm

Location: Via Zoom

***Sandoval Extension Master Gardeners educate and serve our communities in sustainable high desert gardening.
Sandoval Extension Master Gardeners envision more sustainable gardens throughout Sandoval County.***

Expected Outcomes:

1. Gather and begin
2. Update from Chair and Extension Agent
3. Standing Committees updates, issues, action requested
4. Finance Committee
5. Update from State Advisory Council
6. Feedback from guests

	Topic	Topic Leader	Process	Preparation/Completion Date
1 a	Gather and begin	Meg Hunn	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome and Introductions	AC members: Meg Hunn, Beth Murphy, John Thompson, Michelle Wittie, Penny Lindgren, Mo Casey, Tracy Bogard, Kate Shaddock, Julie Rohr Agent: Rachel Zweig Visitors: Sam Thompson, Pam Knutson, Jeannett Zemen
1 b	Protocol for Zoom meeting	Meg Hunn	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Raise hand to be recognized• Non-Council members will be automatically muted upon entering – questions and comments put into chat	
2 a	Update from Chair	Meg Hunn	+SEMG leadership +11/18 program	+voting will take place during December +Meg encouraged invitation of new members to committees

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				<p>+conversation about Potluck and covid precautions, as we've scheduled for the Saturday before Thanksgiving. We will alert SEMG that 'program' will begin at 1p, followed by food at 1:30 - this way people can stay (or not) to eat and mingle.</p> <p>conversation: food could be more 'snack type.' Meg and Michelle will talk off line about how to change potluck sign up sheet to reflect this.</p> <p>+ a conversation about giving Financial Assistance to people applying for intern year. General consensus around not asking for proof of need (ie SNAP card, etc); request handled by and through the agent (to protect confidentiality of the recipient); to add a line item to future budgets for financial assistance that the agent can draw from for assistance with intern fees and/or membership fees. Rachel will follow up with any 2024 applicants requesting financial assistance and ask Lynda G at the state level to waive the \$100 education fee that SEMG pays to NMSU for each intern who requests financial assistance - SEMG would like to encourage the sharing and spreading of horticultural knowledge.</p>
2 b	Update from Extension Agent	Rachel Zweig	+ Updates from Extension Agent	<p>+Rachel thanked AC for taking on extra responsibilities while she was on vacation.</p> <p>+Rachel asked for any SEMGs w carpentry skills to consider volunteering at her upcoming carpentry workshop.</p>
3	Standing Committee updates:			

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3 a	Education	John Thompson Michelle Wittie	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + 2023 Graduation/Certification on Saturday 11/18 at 1p at St Francis, RR will include Life Member recognitions; 2023 Master Gardeners; 5- and 10-year awards +Intern Application process and timeline for 2024 +Videos of SEMG Projects for 2024 intern class and website +2024 Mentor sign ups +other 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +2023 intern Gil M conducting an evaluation survey of 2023 interns - info will be shared w AC +30 applications to date for 2024 class; 15-17 mentors secured. We opened online application earlier than usual (Sept 1?). Orientation video will be up by 12/1/23 for 2024 intern class; Jan 15 first module opens. Brandt Magic will coordinate intern field trips. +Project videos for website (to help explain projects to interns) - John thompson available to video and edit for projects. +next advanced class: Medicinal Plants 11/4 at 10a at Bernalillo Library (Chris S will video for NMSU's Canvas offering to NM MGs +Gardening with the Masters - ongoing (except December date conflicts with Christmas)
3 b	Outreach	Sandy Liakus Penny Lindgren	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +Outreach Table Team +Health Commons Project: reboot + County Fairgrounds in Cuba project + reboot: project at Placitas Elementary +MG retention and re-engagement team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> +AC approved Outreach Comm's recommendation that the project in collaboration with Sandoval Extension and Cuba Water Works at the Cuba Fairgrounds move forward. Co-chairs will need to be sought. Cost raised from dedication bricks by Extension Office / State Fair folks. SEMG's part would be aiding design, which could be focused as a Restoration Project w help of Mike Halverson. This project has the added benefit of getting SEMG further 'out' into Sandoval County - and could result in MGs from Cuba. +AC approved Outreach Committee recommendation that the Health Commons Garden reboot, chaired by Pam Knutson and Sharon Schultz, go forward, recognising that going forward could result in a change from original

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				<p>planting plans. AC did not act on the budget request, as Sharon and Pam need to get more info about what the county wants to have there and how much they are willing to support this thru people power.</p> <p>+AC approved Outreach Committee recommendation for the Placitas Elementary School project - and to search for new co-chairs. 25 families and children there have expressed interest in gardening there. Former chairs, Sandy Liakus and Donna Popp are willing to coach new chairs.</p> <p>+Member Engagement Task Force - Meg introduced the report submitted by Nancy Rutland, and the AC approved for Member Engagement Task Force to move ahead to plan yearly activities designed to help bring SEMGs together to connect and collaborate. (report copied below)</p>
3 c	Member-ship	Mo Casey	+consolidated 2023 class into membership roster +hours due 10/15 +collect 2024 dues until 12/31 from all MGs except Life Members and 2023 class	+website spreadsheet now includes interns with active veterans +hours due 10/15 +dues need to be paid by 12/31
3 d	Communication	Kate Shadock Tracy Bogard	+WebSite Project Pages +other	+Tracy reiterated that the project videos are meant to share info with interns about the projects, and are not meant to take away from or replace anything that the projects are already doing on their own (for example, this will NOT replace the websites of Seed2Need or the Placitas Garden Tour). +a reminder that when sharing events, to please send them to both Joan Ellis (Facebook) and Adrienne Smith (web calendar).

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4	Finance Committee	Beth Murphy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Treasurer Report for last month using FY 2023-2024 budget to actual 	+dues and intern payments brought in \$4098 in September, expenses were minimal. Beth expects October expenses to be higher, as SEMG pays for gifts and badges to interns and Life Members.
5	Update from State Advisory Council	Julie Rohr	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Update from NMSU EMG Advisory Council 	<p>+met yesterday!</p> <p>+new marketing plan for MGs thru NM</p> <p>+Bernalillo MGs will put out info about SEMG at the NM State Fair, if we give it to them!</p> <p>+there is a new horticulture chair at NMSU - who has experience w MGs!</p> <p>+new volunteer management software is still being negotiated. SEMG will need to consider who helps roll this out to our members when it's ready</p> <p>+new intern modules are being decided</p> <p>+interns will have more time to take quizzes - but can only work one week ahead.</p> <p>+some counties have groups of people who have watch parties for intern modules.</p> <p>+public facing home-horticulture lessons go 'live' Jan 2024 as a revenue source for NMSU</p> <p>+SW Harvest for Health grant submitted (pairs MG w a person w cancer to grow foods) - Sandoval is one of three counties where this will take place</p> <p>+Home Yard certification program on 'back burner' for now - Lynda plans to enlist NMSU faculty for assistance</p> <p>+Junior Master Gardener program - SEMG (or SEMG volunteers) could consider doing this</p> <p>+Advanced Continuing Education will be available for MGs thru online Canvas program.</p>

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6	Feedback from guests		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Non-Council members to provide feedback and suggestions to the Council 	

Meeting ended 2:35. Notes compiled by Meg Hunn.

Outreach report + Member Engagement Proposal copied below

Outreach Report:

There are the items from the Outreach Committee that need to be discussed(and decided?) by the Advisory Committee.

1) Project from Steve Lucero and Madeline Gruney. The Outreach Committee sends the Project request to the Advisory Council for approval. The Project does not have a Project chair(s) and that will need to be done. Ms Gruney has a plan to fund the project by selling Honorariums for names to be placed on benches, a wall honoring county fair organizers, past 4-H leaders, and others who have contributed to the 50 year history of the Sandoval County Fair in Cuba. At the present time there is a plan for a small area between the bathrooms and the designated vendor area that is uneven, filled with plant material of unknown type, and trash. If this could be used as a sitting area for fair attendees, a safe transit area for those going from the vendor area to the stage and food area, it would be a great improvement to the fairgrounds. SEMG would be responsible for the restoration/landscaping of the area. At this time we are the idea people, the funding is to come from the Honorariums that will be handled by Gruney/Lucero at the extension office. Public Works has agreed to supply the water for the project. If the Advisory Council approves we will start looking for project chairs.

2) The Outreach Committee asks for approval for further investigation of the project. Healthcommons garden project chairs MGs Pam Knudson and Sharon Schultz have been working on tracking the history of the Health Commons garden project started in 2019-2020. Please note the project description and budget. They have met with numerous county officials(Sandoval County Manager, County Works director, Jayme Espinosa) and Rachel Zweig to determine what the county wants and what they are willing to support. There is presently a design plan that may or may not be used on the reboot. Outreach Committee notes that this project has been on hold for awhile and in some form(either the previous plan or one that fits better with the present situation at the county office) should move forward because the Healthcommons area could be used as a green area for the county offices. The project chairs have submitted a proposal with a budget,

and are asking for approval to meet with the county, discuss what we can do and what support we need and how much buy in from the county extension office is available.

3) Placitas Elementary School Gardening Project. Sandy Liakus and Donna Popp were the previous chairs for this project that is also on hold due to the pandemic. The school has asked that this project be restarted. Sandy and Donna are ready to consult with the new project chairs when they are named.

October 5, 2023 Submitted by Nancy Rutland SEMG 2012

Member Engagement Task Force Findings

How many members do we lose annually and how do we keep members engaged? I

looked at the numbers statewide, talked to MGs and extension agents, and reviewed SEMG member surveys, finding that membership is stable across counties. For SEMG, 25-35 interns join each year, and the same number leave. For Bernalillo County, the size of the room and how many can be accommodated was the only limit on how many interns to take. Their theory is the more the merrier. Chief reasons for leaving are health of the member or family, death of member and moving out of our region. Additional reasons include inability to complete the intern classes, financial burden, a personality conflict, and not bonding with other members. Covid exacerbated problems plus it ended in-person intern classes. Today it is more difficult for members to meet each other and form friendships than pre-Covid.

Bernalillo County MGs identified that member acknowledgment is a big factor in retention and that large counties with 150+ (Bernalillo, Sandoval, and Santa Fe) also have a hard time gathering members together and knowing one another. Bernalillo organizes a yearly Tomato Festival which brings nearly all members together. Members having fun together stay involved. Community fosters engagement.

Create a Member Engagement Team

A Member Engagement Team would be tasked with bringing back favorite SEMG

activities and introducing new ways for members to interact. The goal of the team is member engagement and retention. In talking to MGs, good ideas emerged. Janet Blair expanded a proposed meet-and-greet at Heidi's new ice cream shop to include an educational talk on best raspberry growing practices. Janet referenced The League of Women Voters "Learning Lunches" at which members meet and learn from an expert monthly. Sam Thompson explained the educational and popular intern field trips which began in 2021. The trips are open to veterans when space allows. An additional field

trip for veterans is a possibility. Resurrecting our yearly member garden potluck, starting garden coffee hours, tours of member gardens, or a book group are engagement ideas worth exploring.

In discussing engagement, MGs mentioned logistical challenges: searching website, remembering new yearly passwords, finding education opportunities, learning about upcoming field trips, and accessing information on scholarships and costs of re-taking intern classes.

Proposal for Member Engagement Team

Create a “Membership Engagement Team” to create and implement several yearly

activities for retaining veteran master gardener members, re-engaging lapsed members, and bringing new and veteran members together.

Create and analyze a yearly intern/veteran survey to determine success of year’s activities and possibilities for new group member events.

October 5, 2023 Submitted by Nancy Rutland SEMG 2012

KEEPING MEMBERS

doing good work supporting sustainable gardening

helping one’s community

volunteering

having fun

making new friends

knowing each other

being respected and acknowledged for a job well done learning by attending outings and workshops

learning by working with others ease in completing required hours easy access to information

team work

CHALLENGES TO ENGAGEMENT knowing fellow members

identifying current opportunities in each area and completing hours earned for: volunteering
outreach

education keeping it fun

CREATE NEW MEMBERSHIP ENGAGEMENT TEAM purpose: to keep members s
to create and implement 3 annual activities report to Advisory Committee

October 5, 2023 Submitted by Nancy Rutland SEMG 2012